

STUDENT ASSESSMENT NEWS

[Archived Student Assessment News](#)

March 11, 2015

Connecticut State Department Of Education

CTStudentAssessment@ct.gov

860-713-6860

Changes to the Read Aloud non-embedded Accommodation for Grades 3-5

English Language Arts (ELA) Reading Passages

"Smarter Balanced uses evidence-based decision making practices throughout the test development process, which includes recommendations and decisions concerning accessibility resources. Discussions regarding read aloud/text-to-speech with a multi-disciplinary team of experts revealed that experts view decoding in Grades 3-5 differently. Although some experts view decoding as the interaction between the student and written text, other experts have a broader perspective. These other experts view decoding as the interaction between a student and information at large, which can include text, tactile, audio, gestures and other presentation styles."

- Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines (UAAG) based on the March 6, 2015 decision

- **Effective immediately, the Read Aloud non-embedded accommodation is allowed in Grades 3-5 for all ELA reading passages for the 2014-15 Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) administration.**
- For a student in Grades 3-5 to be considered for a Read Aloud accommodation, there must be documentation of the need for a read aloud for ELA reading in a student's 504 Plan or individualized education program (IEP). This accommodation should be recorded on page 8 of a student's IEP, Program Accommodations and Modifications, and should reflect the context in which the student currently receives this accommodation. For example, if a student uses books on tape, text-to-speech, or has any written material read aloud and these accommodations are documented in his/her current 504 Plan or IEP, the student would then be eligible for a Read Aloud on the 2014-15 SBA administration. If such accommodations are already documented on page 8 of the IEP, no IEP amendment would be necessary.
- This accommodation is appropriate for a very small number of students who have print-related disabilities (estimated to be approximately 1-2 percent of students with disabilities participating in a general assessment).
- For the 2015 SBA administration, the CSDE will capture this information **ONLY** on the CSDE [Accommodations Data Entry Web site for students in Grades 3-5](#). If the student is registered for accommodations, follow these steps:
 1. Log into [Accommodations Data Entry Web site](#).
 2. In **Student Search** type in the student's SASID.
 3. On the [Test/Support Accommodation Page](#) click on "Text-to-Speech for ELA Reading Passages (Grades 6-8 & 11 only*) (S)(5)."

*NOTE: Grades 3-5 **now** have access to this Read Aloud accommodation.
- By June 2015 Smarter Balanced members will discuss the ELA Read Aloud non-embedded accommodation and evaluate the practicability of adding the embedded text-to-speech accommodation.

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- Since text-to-speech is not available because of the lateness of this decision by the Smarter Balanced Governing States, only the Read Aloud accommodation will be available for reading passages. The implementation of this accommodation requires a certified educator to read over the [Connecticut Read Aloud Protocol for Smarter Balanced Assessments](#), sign the [Security/Confidentiality Agreement](#) and fax (860-713-7030) it back to CSDE.

Please contact Joe Amenta at joseph.amenta@ct.gov (860-713-6855) or Janet Stuck at janet.stuck@ct.gov (860-713-6837) with any questions.

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Levy Gillespie
Equal Employment Opportunity Director/American with Disabilities Act Coordinator
Connecticut State Department of Education
25 Industrial Park Road
Middletown, CT
860-807-2071

